

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 MONTEVIDEO 5730

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, MILI, UY
SUBJ: VISIT OF SOUTHCOM COMMANDER LT GENERAL DENNIS P. MCAULIFFE

REF: MONTEVIDEO 5688

1. SUMMARY. DURING A DAY-AND-A-HALF VISIT HERE, SOUTH-
COM COMMANDER, LT. GEN. MC AULIFFE MADE CLEAR TO GOU OF-
FICIALS AT ALL LEVELS A) THAT THE U.S. MILITARY FULLY
SUPPORTED THE ADMINISTRATION'S HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY,
B) THAT WE COULD RENEW THE COOPERATIVE MILITARY RELATIONS OF
THE PAST ONLY IF THE HUMAN RIGHTS IMEDIMENT WAS REMOVED, AND
C) THAT IT WAS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE URUGUAYAN
GOVERNMENT TO TAKE THOSE ACTIONS NECESSARY TO IMPROVE
ITS HUMAN RIGHTS IMAGE. RATHER THAN ENGAGING IN A
DIALOGUE, THE URUGUAYAN MILITARY AUTHORITIES FOUND
INSULT IN A LUNCHEON TOAST AND AVOIDED FURTHER DISCUSSIONS.
A SMALL GROUP WITHIN THE MILITARY HAS SINCE USED THE
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GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED PRESS TO ATTACK GEN. MC AULIFFE FOR
ALLEGEDLY TELLING THE URUGUAYAN GOVERNMENT
HOW TO BEHAVE. THIS SMALL GROUP APPARENTLY SEEKS
CONFRONTATION WITH THE U.S. FOR ITS OWN PURPOSES.
WHETHER IT WILL SUCCEED IN DRIVING THE ISSUE EVEN
FURTHER IN THAT DIRECTION DEPENDS ON WHETHER THE
COOLER HEADS IN THE ARMED FORCES PREVAIL. END SUMMARY.

2. CINCSO COMMANDER LT. GEN. MCAULIFFE VISITED MONTEVIEDO DECEMBER 10 THROUGH 13, THOUGH HIS OFFICIAL CONTACTS WERE CONFINED TO THE LAST DAY AND A HALF. HE CALLED ON A VARIETY OF GOU CIVILIAN AND MILITARY LEADERS. THE AMBASSADOR ACCOMPANIED HIM ON ALL CALLS, AS DID THE ODC CHIEF AND COL. MATEOS OF THE URUGUAYAN ARMY, WHO WAS ASSIGNED AS AIDE AND INTERPRETER.

3. GENERAL MACULIFFE BEGAN HIS OFFICIAL SCHEDULE MONDAY, DECEMBER 12, WITH A COURTESY CALL ON THE PRESIDENT AND THE FOREIGN MINISTER. THOUGH THE CONVERSATION WAS DEVOTED MAINLY TO PLEASANTRIES, THE PRESIDENT STATES AT ONE POINT, WITH A SMILE, THAT "DESPITE OUR AFFECTION FOR YOUR COUNTRY YOU KEEP CUFFING US." NEXT HE MET WITH THE THREE CINCS (VADORA, ARMY; PALADINI, AIR FORCE, MARQUEZ, NAVY) AT THEIR COMBINED HEADQUARTERS. GEM. MCAULIFFE BEGAN BY STATING THAT HIS VISIT WAS PRIMARILY ONE OF ORIENTATION, INASMUCH AS HE HAD NEVER VISITED URUGUAY SINCE HAVING TAKEN UP HIS DUTIES AS CINCSOUTH. HE LOOKED FORWARD TO FRANK DISCUSSION WITH THE GOU CIVILIAN AND MILITARY LEADERS. HE SAID OUR TWO COUNTRIES HAD ENJOYED A CLOSE AND COOPERATIVE MILITARY RELATIONSHIP OVER AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME, AND THAT WE WERE HOPEFUL THAT THESE COULD BE CONTINUED AGAIN SOMETIME IN THE NEAR FUTURE
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ONCE THE HUMAN RIGHTS IMPEDIMENT HAD BEEN REMOVED. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE U.S. ARMED FORCES SUPPORTED THE HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY OF THE ADMINISTRATION.

4. VADORA, WHO BEGAN AS SPOKESMAN FOR THE GROUP, INDICATED THAT THE URUGUAYAN MILITARY SHARED THE DESIRE TO RE-ESTABLISH THE CLOSE MILITARY TIES ENJOYED IN THE PAST. HIS COLLEAGUES COULD SPEAK FOR THEIR SERVICES, BUT AS FOR THE ARMY THE TERMINATION OF TRAINING IN U.S. SCHOOLS IN THE CANAL ZONE AND IN THE UNITED STATES, WAS CREATING A BREACH IN THE PERSONAL CONTACTS OF THE PAST AND COULD HAVE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES IN THE FUTURE. PALADINI SAID THE AIR FORCE HAD U.S. EQUIPMENT WHICH NEEDED SPARE PARTS. HE REFERRED SPECIFICALLY TO THE HELICOPTERS. MARQUEZ CHIMED IN TO SAY THAT THE NAVY SUFFERED FROM THE ABSENCE OF SPARE PARTS FOR ITS AMERICAN-MADE VESSELS, BUT HE ADDED SMILINGLY, "WE ARE MAKING DO WITH OUR EXCELLENT MAINTENANCE CAPABILITY."

5. GEN. MC AULIFFE SAID WE ALSO REGRETTED THAT THE TRAINING COURSES WERE NO LONGER AVAILABLE TO URUGUAYAN

STUDENTS, AND THAT WE COULD NOT PROVIDE SPARE PARTS AND OTHER DEFENSE MATERIAL, BUT THEY HAD TO UNDERSTAND THAT CLOSE MILITARY COOPERATION COULD BE RENEWED UNTIL THE HUMAN RIGHTS IMPEDIMENT HAD BEEN REMOVED. THIS PROVOKED AN EMOTIONAL OUTBURST BY MARQUEZ, WHO FIRED AN INCOHERENT BARRAGE IN A MIXTURE OF ENGLISH AND SPANISH WHICH POINTED TO U.S. INSENSITIVITY AND DEFENDED URUGUAY'S RECORD. BEFORE GEN. MC AULIFFE COULD RESPOND, VADORA COMPLAINED THAT "HE SAW NO WAY" FOR THE GOU TO CONVINCE US THAT THE SITUATION WAS NOT AS BAD AS PAINTED. HE COMPLAINED THAT WHEN HE WAS IN WASHINGTON, WOLA HAD GONE TO THE EXTENT OF EVEN CHARGING THAT PEOPLE WERE STARVING TO DEATH

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IN URUGUAY, THAT MEDICAL FACILITIES WERE INADEQUATE, AND THAT THE STANDARD OF LIVING WAS SUBSTANDARD. HE LAMENTED THAT THE GOU WITH ITS MODEST RESOURCES COULD NOT DEFENT AGAINST SUCH ATTACKS, AND SAW AS A CONSEQUENCE THAT THE YOUNG OFFICERS IN THE URUGUAYAN ARMY WOULD BECOME INCREASINLY BITTER TOWARD THE UNITED STATES.

6. GEN. MCAULIFFE EXPLAINED CALMLY THAT WE RECOGNIZED THAT EXAGGERATIONS AND SELF-SERVING DISTORTIONS HAVE BEEN MIXED IN WITH THE CHARGES LEVELED AGAINST URUGUAY,

BUT THE FAILURE OF THE GOU TO ANSWER THESE ALLEGATIONS WAS LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS POOR INTERNATIONAL IMAGE. MARQUEZ BROKE IN WITH A SECOND LONG DIATRIBE WHICH ARGUED THAT THE URUGUAYAN RECORD ON HUMAN RIGHTS COMPARES FAVORABLY WITH THAT OF THE UNITED STATES. HE TOLD HIS COLLEAGUES, "THERE IS NO PURPOSE SERVED IN THIS TYPE OF DIALOGUE; IT IS JUST WORDS--NOTHING HAS CHANGED." HE CHARGED
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THAT WE FAIL TO RECOGNIZE A GUERILLA WAR IS STILL GOING ON IN URUGUAY, AND MADE THE PREPOSTEROUS STATEMENT THAT THERE ARE BETWEEN "15 AND 20 SUBVERSIVE ORGANIZATIONS" OPERATING IN THE COUNTRY TODAY. WHEN GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO RETORT, GEN. MCAULIFFE SAID HIS EXPERIENCES IN THREE WARS (ONE OF WHICH WAS A WAR OF INSURGENCY IN VIETNAM) CONVINCED HIM THAT THERE IS NO CONFLICT INVOLVED IN DEFENDING AGAINST AN INSURGENT THREAT AND PROTECTING INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS. IN THOSE CASES WHERE A MEMBER OF OUR ARMED FORCES ABUSED HIS POWER OR COMMITTED A CRIMINAL ACT IN COMBAT WE HAD DEALT WITH HIM SEVERELY. VADORA REMARKED SADLY THAT WE DID NOT UNDERSTAND THE NATURE OF THE COMMUNIST THREAT IN URUGUAY, AND AS A CONSEQUENCE IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE URUGUAYAN GOVERNMENT TO CONVINCE US THAT THEY HAD AND WERE HANDLING THE SITUATION WELL. GEN. MCAULIFFE REMINDED VADORA THAT THE USG HAD HAD A GREAT DEAL OF EXPERIENCE IN COMBATTING INSURGENCIES AND THAT WE WERE NOT INDIFFERENT TO THE DIFFICULTIES INHERENT IN THESE CAMPAIGNS. BUT IT APPEARED TO HIM THAT IF INDEED THE COMMUNIST THREAT WAS AS SERIOUS AS THEY CLAIM IT WAS IN THE INTEREST OF THE GOU TO REINFORCE ITS TIES WITH OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE FREE WORLD TO BETTER COMBAT THE PROBLEM. HE ADDED THAT IT DID NOT APPEAR IN THEIR INTEREST TO ISOLATE THEMSELVES. THE MEETING ENDED ON THAT NOTE.

7. THE NEXT CALL WAS ON MINISTER OF DEFENSE RAVENNA, WHO HAD HIS SUB-SECRETARY IN ATTENDANCE. GEN. MCAULIFFE AGAIN DETAILED THE PURPOSE OF HIS VISIT, THAT IT WAS FOR ORIENTATION PURPOSES AND TO MAKE IT CLEAR TO THE MILITARY AND CIVILIAN AUTHORITIES IN URUGUAY THE IMPORTANCE THE U.S. ARMED FORCES AND THE USG PLACE ON
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THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE. RAVENNA, WHO SPEAKS FLUENT ENGLISH, CHOSE TO RESPOND IN SPANISH. HE DEFENDED

URUGUAY'S HUMAN RIGHTS PERFORMANCE AND SAID ALL THE CHARGES AGAINST URUGUAY WERE "FABRICATIONS AND DISTORTIONS." GEN. MCAULIFFE INDICATED THAT, IF THAT WAS THE CASE, THE URUGUAYAN GOVERNMENT SHOULD PROTECT ITS REPUTATION BY RESPONDING AND STATING THE FACTS. SUB-SECRETARY CHIARINO SAID THAT WAS FRUITLESS. HE WENT ON THAT, "SENATOR KOCH HAD ACCUSED URUGUAY OF VIOLATING HUMAN RIGHTS WHEN HE ADMITTED HIMSELF THAT HE KNEW NOTHING ABOUT THIS COUNTRY AND REFUSED TO ACCEPT ANY EVIDENCE WHICH REFUTED THE DISTORTED CHARGES AGAINST URUGUAY MADE BY INTERESTED PARTIES." MCAULIFFE REITERATED THAT THE ONLY WAY TO CONTEND WITH EXAGGERATED OR DISTORTED ALLEGATIONS WAS TO PRESENT COUNTER EVIDENCE. THE AMBASSADOR OBSERVED THAT CONGRESSMAN KOCH AND OTHERS IN THE U.S. CONGRESS WOULD FREELY ADMIT THAT THEY WERE NOT EXPERTS ON THE URUGUAYAN SCENE, BUT THE PREPONDERANCE OF EVIDENCE PLACED BEFORE THEM WAS OF A NEGATIVE NATURE. THE URUGUAYAN GOVERNMENT FAILED TO PRESENT ANY CONVINCING COUNTER-BALANCING ARGUMENTS. THUS, CONGRESS ACTED AS IT DID. MINISTER RAVENNA ADMITTED THAT THE GOU HAD NOT DONE A GOOD JOB IN MAKING ITS OWN CASE. HE THEN THANKED THE GENERAL FOR HIS CALL AND SAID HE WOULD SEE HIM AT THE LUNCHEON.

8. THE LUNCHEON AT THE NAVAL CLUB WAS ATTENDED BY AN EXTENDED NUMBER OF THE PRINCIPAL MILITARY FIGURES IN THE COUNTRY AS WELL AS THE FOREIGN AND DEFENSE MINISTERS. IN ADDITION TO THE THREE CINCS, ALSO IN ATTENDANCE WERE GEN. LINARES BRUM (MININTERIOR), GEN. RAIMUNDEZ (PRES. OF BANK OF REPUBLIC) GEN. RAPELA (MIL. ADJ. TO THE PRES.), GEN. NUNEZ (ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF), GEN. HONTOU (COMMANDER OF THIRD ZONE), BRIG. BENDAHAN (CHIEF, AIR FORCE GENERAL STAFF) AND COL. MATEOS. IN ADDITION TO THE

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GENERAL AND THE AMBASSADOR, ALSO INVITED TO THE AMERICAN SIDE WERE THE SIX OFFICERS OF THE DAO AND ODC AS WELL AS SOME MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL'S PARTY.

9. AFTER A VERY BRIEF COCKTAIL SESSION BY URUGUAYAN STANDARDS, WE SAT DOWN TO LUNCH. WE HAD ANTICIPATED THAT FOLLOWING THE LUNCH THERE WOULD BE AN EXTENDED GIVE-AND-TAKE AS HAD OCCURRED DURING THE TODMAN VISIT. HOWEVER, DEFMIN RAVENNA TOLD GEN. MCAULIFFE THAT WOULD NOT BE THE CASE BECAUSE OTHER IMPORTANT

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REUNIONS MADE IT NECESSARY FOR THE GENERAL STAFF AND OTHER OFFICIALS TO LEAVE PROMPTLY. THIS REMARK PROMPTED GEN. MC AULIFFE TO READ THE COMMENTS (SEE REFTEL) WHICH HE INTENDED TO USE AS TALKING POINTS DURING THE GIVE-AND-TAKE OF THE DEBATE, GIVEN HIS CONCERN THAT THERE WOULD BE NO POST-LUNCHEON OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE THEM TO THE ASSEMBLED GOU LEADERSHIP.

10. THE URUGUAYANS STIFFENED DURING HIS REMARKS AND SOME DID NOT EVEN RAISE THEIR GLASS FOR THE TOAST. ALL THE MILITARY MEMBERS THEN LEFT THE CLUB HURRIEDLY, LEAVING BEHIND THE TWO MINISTERS. ROVIRA APPROACHED THE GENERAL IN A BELLIGERENT MOOD AND SAID HE WAS SURPRISED THAT GENERAL MC AULIFFE WAS NOT AWARE OF THE REAL SITUATION IN RUGUAY SINCE THE AMERICAN EMBASSY AND THE U.S. MILITARY SHOULD KNOW THE REAL FACTS OF WHAT WAS GOING ON. HE SAID URUGUAY HAS DEFNDED ITSELF AGAINST INTERNATIONALLY INSPIRED TERRORISTS, AND THERE HAD BEEN NO VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS. GEN. MC AULIFFE
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SAID THE URUGUAYAN GOVERNMENT HAD THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANSWERING THE ALLEGATIONS LEVELLED AGAINST URUGUAY. IT WAS NOT A PROPER ROLE FOR THE U.S. EMBASSY

OR THE USG TO PLAY, OR, INDEED, ONE THAT IT COULD PLAY. HE ADDED THAT EVERY COUNTRY HAD TO ATTEND TO ITS OWN INTERNATIONAL IMAGE. ROVIRA STAMMERED SOMETHING ABOUT "YOU SHOULD REALIZE THAT WE HAVE A COMMON ENEMY" AND DEPARTED. SO DID RAVENNA.

11. WHAT TOOK PLACE AT THE EMBASSY RECEPTION THAT EVENING IN THE GENERAL'S HONOR IS OUTLINED IN THE REFERENCED TELEGRAM. THE FOLLOWING DAY THE ONLY OFFICIALS ACTS ON GEN. MCAULIFFE'S SCHEDULE WERE A WREATH LAYING CEREMONY AT THE ARTIGAS STATUE AND A DEPARTURE CEREMONY AT THE AIRPORT. AT NEITHER OF THESE TWO EVENTS DID A SENIOR MILITARY OFFICER APPEAR. ONLY COL. MATEOS, THE GENERAL'S ESCORT, WAS PRESENT AT THE WREATH LAYING CEREMONY. HE WAS JOINED BY THE BASE COMMANDER AT THE AIRPORT. ON HIS DEPARTURE GEN. MC AULIFFE THANKED THE COL. FOR THE HONORS BESTOWED UPON HIM AND THE COURTESIES EXTENDED TO HIM DURING HIS VISIT AND ASKED THE COL. TO PASS ON TO HIS SUPERIORS THAT HE (GEN. MC AULIFFE) REGRETTED THAT THEY WERE UNABLE TO ATTEND THE RECEPTION AND THEREBY DEPRIVED HIM OF THE OPPORTUNITY OF CONTINUING A DIALOGUE.

12. COMMENTS. IN RECONSTRUCTING THE VISIT IT BECOMES CLEAR THAT THE KEY MEETING WAS THE MORNING SESSION WITH THE CINCS. AT THAT SESSION, GEN. MC AULIFFE DEMOLISHED THE MYTH THAT HAS PERSISTED IN THE MINDS OF URUGUAYAN MILITARY AUTHORITIES DESPITE ALL OUR EFFORTS, THAT THE U.S. MILITARY TAKES A SOFER STAND ON HUMAN RIGHTS THAN DO OTHER MEMBERS OF THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION. AND WHEN THEY WERE TOLD THAT A RETURN TO THE COOPERATIVE MILITARY RELATIONSHIP OF THE PAST RESTED ON INTERNATIONAL ACCEPTANCE

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OF IMPROVED PERFORMANCE IN PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS, THEY STOPPED LISTENING AND DECIDED THERE WAS LITTLE PURPOSE IN EXTENDED SIALOGUE. THAT IS WHY THE AFTERNOON LUNCHEON DISCUSSION WAS ABORTED EVEN BEFORE THE GENERAL OFFERED HIS TOAST. THE GOU MILITARY HAD ALREADY DECIDED THERE WAS NO PURPOSE IN FURTHER DIALOGUE. HIS TOAST OFFERED A PRETEXT FOR FEIGNING INSULT TO ADD TO THEIR DISILLISIONMENT ON THE POLICY SIDE.

13. THIS EXPLAINS THE QUICK EXIT FROM THE LUNCHEON AND THEIR BOYCOTTING THE RECEPTION AT THE RESIDENCE. BUT IT DOES NOT EXPLAIN THE ESCALATION TO A PRESS ATTACK AND A POSSIBLE FURTHER ATTACK ON THE MISSION, AND THE AMBASSADOR BY A SMALL, STILL-UNIDENTIFIED GROUP WITHIN THE MILITARY WHO FOR REASONS OF THEIR OWN WANTED TO MAKE THIS A CONFRONTATIONAL ISSUE. HOW SUCCESSFUL THEY WILL BE IN ESCALATING THIS ISSUE FURTHER REMAINS TO BE SEEN.

14. BUT WHATEVER THE SHORT-TERM REACTION, OVER THE

LONG TERM WE CAN COUNT SOME SPECIFIC GAINS. FIRST, THE MC AULIFFE VISIT DISPELLED THE MYTH OF A DIVISION WITHIN OUR OWN RANKS. SECOND, IT SHOULD MAKE CLEAR TO EVERY SERIOUS-MINDED PERSON IN THE GOU THAT THE EXTREMISTS IN THEIR RANKS, WHO HAVE THE TEMERITY TO EVEN ATTACK THE PENTAGON, CAN LEAD THIS COUNTRY ONLY TO FURTHER ISOLATION. AND, THIRD, BECAUSE OF ITS SELF-PROPAGATED PRESS ATTACK ON GEN. MC AULIFFE, THE GOU IRONICALLY HAS BROADCAST TO ITS OWN PEOPLE WHAT IT REFUSES TO ALLOW THE PRESS TO PRINT; NAMELY, THAT THE USG CONTINUES TO HOLD A MIRROR UP BEFORE THE URUGUAYAN AUTHORITIES ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE.

15. WHAT IS ALSO CLEAR IS THT THEY HAD NOT PLANNED FOR THE VISIT, AND HAD NOT THOUGHT THROUGH HOW THEY COULD BEST MAKE ISE OF THE VISIT OF AN IMPORTANT U.S. MILITARY FIGURE. DESPITE ALL THE DIALOGUE WE HAVE HAD OVER THE PAST MONTHS, THEY STILL FELL
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BACK ON THE TIME-WORN DEFENSE THAT THEY ARE THE VICTIMS RATHER THAN THE CULPRITS IN THE HUMAN RIGHT AREA.

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